

12/18/78

EPA Inspection

Inspection of Sand and Gravel Pit at Elstton, Maryland

Jeffrey Ross
Office of Special Programs (OSPA)

Files

On December 18, 1978 representatives of EPA, the Maryland DIA and the Health Department, conducted an inspection of the subject site which was reported to have been the dump site for sludge and liquid wastes produced by the Galaxy Chemical Company.

Representing EPA were:

C. Sapp - Ref.
C. Tilla - Ref.
J. Ross - Ref.
J. Weisz - ADRH
E. Palendy - ADRH
D. Brown - ADRH

Representing the Maryland DIA were:

A. Schiffman
J. Brown

Representing the Maryland Health Department:

B. Nealy

The inspection began with A. Schiffman and J. Brown explaining the history of the site and a description of the site as it existed prior to the clean up. According to MHD, Galaxy Chemical dumped sludge and liquids from their solvent reprocessing operation in several ponds that were dug out of the abandoned portion of the quarry. The bottom of the pits were dug into a clay-like subsoil which acted as a liner and retarded the percolation of the liquids into the subsoil. Some liquid was reported to have leached through the sandy sides of the pit. Several drums were known to have been buried, but their location was not known. After the State ordered the dumping to cease and the site to be cleaned up, Galaxy had the liquid material pumped out of the ponds. The sludges were covered over with sand and gravel and the pumpings taken by the hauler to New Jersey for disposal.

000101

We examined the ponds that the State indicated at one time contained the hazardous wastes and found them to be empty except for some small quantity of water/leachate. We then went to a point where the State Inspector reported seeing material leaching from the side of the pond down a gully into the stream below. Since the pond was empty there was no further leaching. At a point in the gully soil samples were taken and since the water table was close to the surface we were able to get a groundwater sample. The samples that were taken did a strong petroleum-like odor which the State Inspector identified as being the same odor that pervaded the site prior to the clean up.

Twenty feet below the point of the first sample, Sample #1 was taken. State inspectors reported this as to the bottom of the gully to which liquid was found. The depth to the water table seemed to be comparable to that of the first sample. An additional sample (Sample #2) was taken approximately 20 feet west of the first sample. The water table was noticeably deeper (5 to 6 feet) and the soil was of a clay-like nature. The petroleum-like odor detected in sample number one was also present in both samples 2 and 3. At this point it was discussed whether to sample at the stream to which the groundwater drains. Since the stream was several miles off into the woods and since the likelihood of obtaining a representative sample from the stream was slim, we decided against it.

Instead, at this point we traveled to Galion Unincorporated to verify that waste lagoons previously thought to be in operation were out of service. Upon our arrival we were led by a representative of Galion to the location where the lagoons were once operational. We found what was once the lagoon to be filled with soil. Evidently, they were filled some years ago. Our attention was drawn to several sites of drums, filled with hazardous waste material, piled along by the roadway. The company representative indicated that the drums would ultimately be disposed of by a waste hauler based in western Pennsylvania.

cc: C. Sapp - Enf.
C. Pilla - Enf.
J. Haas - Enf.
C. Howard - ADEM
M. Palensky - ADEM
B. Swire - ADEM

00010: